NEWSLETTER

Volume XIII, No. 1 April 1990

Every Day is EARTH DAY in Los Altos Hills

What's Happening?

Communities throughout the U.S. will be celebrating Earth Day on April 22nd with festivals, speeches, songfests, etc. In Los Altos Hills we wanted to celebrate in a way that would reflect our love for the Town and its unique attributes: the trees, the natural habitat and the trails. As a way to demonstrate this, we propose to make EARTH DAY CLEAN–UP DAY along our roads and trails.

How Will It Work?

Within this newsletter is a special bag. Celebrate Earth Day by taking a walk somewhere in Town, collecting trash along the way in the bag. When the bag is full, leave it on a "designated artery" (see map). If no one in your home can participate in Earth Day, give the bag to a neighbor or friend who can then fill both bags. There is no shortage of trash to pick up. You can even get extra bags at Town Hall during office hours. We have a volunteer team who will drive the "arteries" and pick up the filled bags.

When?

The trash bags will be collected on April 23, the Monday afternoon following Earth Day. We hope to see these bags cropping up along the roadsides as soon as you get this newsletter; however, your bag along the road reminds everyone to participate.

Why the Special Bags?

The planners of this project gave a lot of thought to the expense and environmental impact of special plastic bags. But these bags help identify the trash for the pick-up team, are visible reminders, and they identify this project and the environmental concerns of Los Altos Hills residents. Your bag lying along the road says loud and clear to everyone who sees it, "We love our Town, and we're keeping it clean."

Who Are the Organizers?

This project has been proposed and run by interested citizens and members of the Community Relations and Environmental Design and Protection Committees with the enthusiastic approval of the City Council and Staff.

Participants include Elayne Dauber, Anita Kaplan, Teri McDaniel, Jean Struthers, Andy Compton, and Marcia Vincent.

(See back cover for designated Earth Day Clean-Up arteries.)

Disaster Preparedness: Our Neighborhood Efforts

The Town's volunteer Safety Committee has completed the review of all Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Questionnaires that were returned to the Town. A list of volunteer coordinators has been compiled for each of 35 geographical neighborhoods. Overall, the response has been excellent, although there are still areas that do not have volunteer coordinators. So, if you misplaced the questionnaire and are interested in volunteering, please contact Town Hall.

A meeting will take place on April 24, at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall for all volunteer coordinators and interested community members. The meeting will have several speakers discussing earthquake preparedness and will be a major source of information and

handouts. It is our hope that the coordinators will take back and share this information with their individual neighborhoods and begin to compile their own resource bank of information for use in a disaster.

Members of the Safety Committee will continue to be a resource for individual neighborhood meetings as long as they are needed. For more information, please contact Marcia Thompson, Chairman of the Safety Committee, at 941-2626.

Altamont Path Upgrade

A major upgrade of the Altamont Pathway is now underway. It will provide for a continuous stretch of path along one side of the road from Page Mill Road to Moody Road. Planting of street trees in certain areas will provide a visual barrier and buffer from the road. Markers will be placed to direct path users to connecting off-road paths and into Byrne Park Preserve.

Additional clearing and spraying for poison oak is planned for Byrne Park, and the existing fences on Town land will be repaired. We hope our residents will be encouraged to use the paths for their enjoyment.

The Griffin House

The Griffin home and carriage house, located on the Foothill College Campus, are structures of a bygone era (1901). They were part of an original large estate belonging to Willard M. Griffin, a shipbuilder from Maine. He had purchased 98 acres of the beautiful rolling hill land, which included frame house, horses, and livestock, from Daniel T. Ames at the turn of the century for $10,000 paid "in gold."

The Griffin House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 by Los Altos Hills, the most prestigious recognition which can be given to historic buildings in the United States. The adjacent carriage house is now being used by the Los Altos Fire Department, while the Griffin Home has been sadly neglected by Foothill College, which has used the house as a storage area for years. This home survived the big 1906 earthquake with "nothing more than a few bricks falling off the chimney" and again weathered the 7.1 October 17 quake with some more of the bricks falling down.

Back in 1975, Dr. Joseph Baird Jr., an art consultant from San Francisco stated: "The Griffin House was, at its time, one of the most interesting combinations of architectural form of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Like the houses in England of Charles Voysey and a few rare houses in California by one of the Greene brothers, it shows the still powerful impulse to sharp vertical forms of the medieval revivals of the 19th century, combined with progressive interest in window forms — the whole clothed in a subtle covering of shingles."

Goodwin Steinberg, one of our leading valley architects, has written: "The Griffin House is a charming piece of architecture and part of the heritage of the California school of architecture which influenced the design of Foothill College. The architect, Ernest Kump, designed the college to reflect this and the woodsiness and natural earth tones of Los Altos Hills. It is desirable to keep the house to secure its relationship with our past — an inspiration for the development of Foothill College and a tieback with California."

Library Expansion

Because the library is one of the most popular places in Town, more space is needed. All ages visit the County Library in Los Altos for everything from investment services to storybook hour and videos to computers and CD data bases.

Recently a needs assessment was completed. The County library system has funded a project to do a cost study and develop conceptual plans for adding space. Ripley Associates has been hired to do the study project. Architects are currently working with city staff and county librarians to find innovative solutions to library space requirements.

Los Altos Hills representatives to the Los Altos Library Commission are Elayne Dauber (948-6948) and Judy Duque (941-0637).

Historical Society

Wednesday May 2 - Thursday May 3: Overnight trip to the Jack London Wolf House, Glen Ellen, and the Hope-Merrill B&B in Geyserville for overnight and breakfast. First 12 members who send in a $25.00 deposit per person may ride in the van. If more want to go, we'll try to arrange car pools. Approximate cost (will be refined later) will be $100 per person: picnic lunch and dinner Wednesday, Thursday lunch not included. Singles pair up in queen size beds — no twins available.

Sunday May 20, 3:30 p.m.: Council Chambers at Town Hall. General Meeting.

Speaker: Dr. Albert Shumate, son of the Dr. Shumate, who built one of the first great estates in Los Altos Hills, will relate his early experiences in our town. The brick pillars still standing at Concepcion and Fremont marked the entrance to his property. The home is on what is now Viscaino Rd.

Please bring table-ready hors d'oeuvres or desserts to share.

For more information contact Dan Alexander, President, Los Altos Hills Historical Society, 27200 Elena Road, Los Altos Hills, Ca. 94022, 948-8470.

Your Help Is Needed

Earthquake Essays Solicited

The Town Historian is requesting your participation in recording your recent earthquake experiences. These essays will be displayed in the glass cases at the back of the Council Chambers and then will be compiled into a scrapbook and stored in the local history collection. This will be invaluable information for future generations.

Rosemary would prefer one 8.5" by 11" sheet of paper of written and/or drawn experiences. Photographs of damaged areas are also welcome.

Send To: Rosemary Meyerott, Town Historian, c/o Town Hall, 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

Locally Written Books Wanted

Any books written by Los Altos Hills authors are welcome on the shelves of the History Room at Town Hall. There is a growing number of Wallace Stegner books and they are being read avidly! Rosemary still needs some of Stegner's early books and would appreciate any you can part with. The Friends of the Library have been saving any they come across for the History Room. Contact Rosemary on Tuesday afternoons at Town Hall, 941-7222.

Path Marathon Walkabout on April 28

Volunteers are needed to help the Pathway, Recreation and Parks Committee complete the next phase of the pathway survey. The Committee has completed the research of on-road and off-road paths in Town, and actual inspection of the whole system will begin on Saturday, April 28. We will meet at Town Hall at 9:30 a.m. All who are interested in participating can sign up at Town Hall or call 941-7222.

You will be asked to walk the paths, noting their condition, accessibility, obstructions, etc. Maps and instructions will be provided. Upon completion of the survey, we will meet at the Heritage House for refreshments.

In addition, the Town's winter weed control program for on-road paths has been completed, and spraying for poison oak is underway. Residents wishing to request pathway maintenance can do so by filling out a pathway maintenance request at Town Hall or contacting a Pathway Committee member with their request.

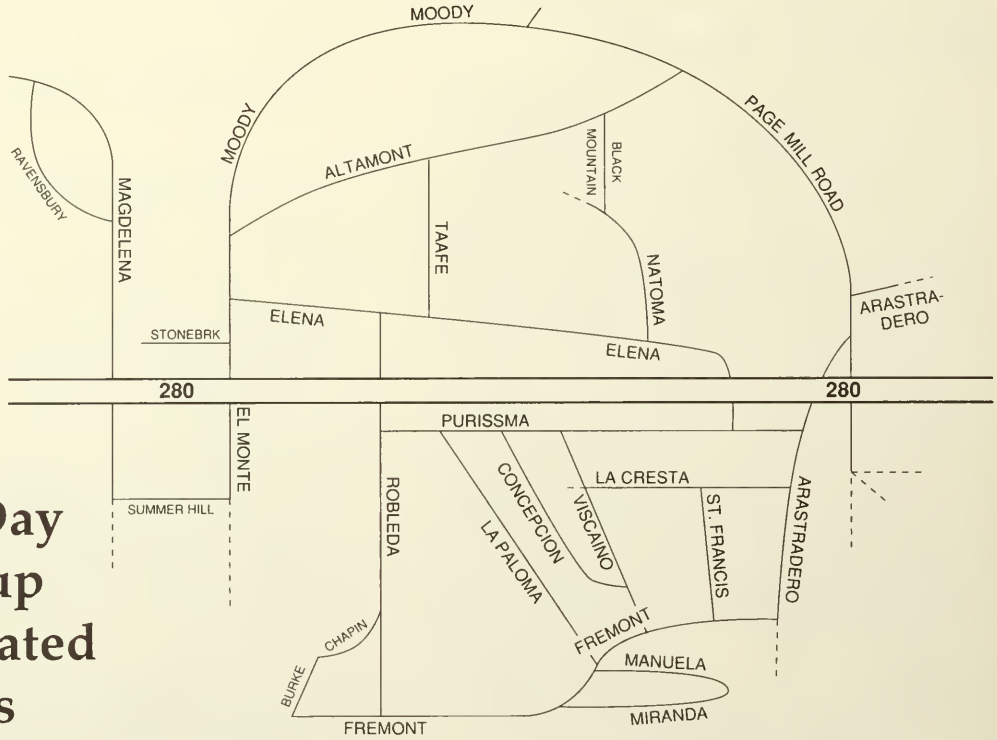
For more information about any pathway issue, please call Dot Schreiner, Chairman of the Pathway, Recreation and Parks Committee, at 949-0152.

Polling Place Workers Needed on June 5

Los Altos Hills needs polling place workers. The day is long, the pay is low, but the intangible rewards to you and your fellow citizens are great! The day lasts from 6:30 a.m. until about 9:30 p.m. Pay for the whole day is $50 for inspectors and $40 for clerks. Training will be provided.

For an interesting, rewarding experience call (408) 299-2694. Volunteer your experience!

Los Altos Hills City Council:
Toni Casey, Mayor
J. Robert Johnson
William Siegel
Barbara Tryon
Mary van Tamelen
City Manager:
Tom Frutchey



Earth Day Clean-up Designated Arteries

Town of Los Altos Hills
26379 Fremont Road
Los Altos Hills, California 94022

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Los Altos, CA
Permit No. 306